**Radheya #2 - A Story from the Mahabharata**

**Note** - This is the same as previous Radheya Play but is adapted for 2 less actors. RDd

**Scene One**

**(Radheya enters. He is a warrior and carries a bow and a quiver full of arrows. There may be crowd sounds but they stop when Radheya takes center stage and addresses Arjuna, who is imagined.)**

**Radheya:** Arjuna, this is Radheya. I have come to challenge you. You seem to be too conceited with the skill you have displayed. With my bow and arrow, I can hit the target as you have done and much more. I have come here to a tournament; not a private show arranged for your benefit. Do you accept my challenge or do you admit that I am a better archer?
**(as Referee of the tournament)** Before we go on, we must observe the rules for fighting a duel. It is a rule that only those who are equal in rank may fight one another. This Arjuna, one of the five Pandava brothers is the youngest son of Queen Kunti. He belongs to the royal house of the Kurus. You, young man, must now announce your father and the family to which you belong.

**(Radheya slowly lowers his head in sadness and sits. The sun slowly sets and rises with accompanying music. As if in a dream, Kunti appears and faces the audience. She pantomimes that she is placing a baby in a box and setting the box in the river, watching it float away. Kunti leaves. Radheya rises.)**

**Scene Two**

**(Radheya performs puja to Surya, then he addresses Surya.)**

**Radheya:** O my Father, everyday when you reach the zenith, I worship you and when my worship is over, I wait for someone to ask me for alms. I grant them all that they may ask. I am sure that (Kunti enters with her face concealed) has me some piety and peace. I am happy to give. In a dream, you warned me not to give to the brahmana "That is Indra in disguise," you said - but, I

disobeyed you. I am willing to give anybody my life. I have never loved this life of mine. I do not mind giving it away. Indra came to me and begged for my armour and earrings. Without them, my death is certain in the coming battle. But he gave me his own shakti saying that i could call upon a once in order to kill my enemy.

**(Kunti waits behind him and Radheya turns around to see who is watching him.)**

**Radheya:** Please sit down in the shade. **(He offers respects)** I am Radheya. What may I do for you? Please tell me what you want.

**Kunti: (stares at Radheya for a while before she speaks - she is tearful)** You may know me, or you may not. I have come for something.

**Radheya:** I do not know you; yet, I feel that I do know you. I feel as though I have known you all of my life. Your form, your tears, your sad voice - they all seem to be so very familiar. But, for the life of me, I cannot say when I have seen you. Excuse me.

**(Radheya turns to take his arati paraphernalia and drops them.)** Yes, yes, I know you! You are the woman that haunts me at night!

**Kunti:** What are you saying? I do not understand. I haunt you at night? I will sit and listen; I am not in a hurry. I have come to spend some time with you.

**Radheya:** It is very strange. I have never told anyone about this woman who haunts me, except my mother, Radha. Still, looking at you, I want to tell you all about myself. I feel that you love me and understand my heart. My name is Radheya. My Mother's name is Radha. But then, she is not my mother. She did not give birth to me. My Father, Atiratha, found me floating on the river Ganga. My Father took me to his wife, Radha and made a gift of me to her. That is why I am called Radheya. But, I am wondering - whenever I went to sleep, I used to be

disturbed by a dream. It would always be the same dream. I would see a woman, she would be dressed in costly robes, her face would be hidden by a veil. I would be lying down and she would bend over me. I would get up and ask her, "Who are you?" But, she would vanish like a startled ghost. As years passed, the woman would haunt me only once in a while. I think it was my mother who comes to me in my dreams.

**Kunti: (She cannot look at him now)** I am your mother. I am Kunti. You are my first born.

**Radheya:** Oh, am I awake or asleep? Perhaps I am dreaming again. **(They are in each other's arms.)** You have come. If only you know how much I have longed for this moment. Mother, my mother, why did you stay away from me for so long? Mother, let us just sit down and just be with each other. This happiness will not last long. I have the association of my father, Surya, daily, but not you, so I must take advantage of it now.

**Kunti:** How did you know who your father is?

**Radheya:** It doesn't matter. Please, tell me what it is that you have come here for.

**Kunti:** My child, you have been suffering many indignities for all these years. That was because the world did not know that you are the son of Surya and Kunti. It is not right that you should fight with your brothers. You must come with me, I will take you to the Pandavas. You can find happiness and peace in the company of Yudhisthira. Come with me and gladden my heart. This is the request I put to you. Come, my son.

**Radheya: (pauses and contemplates)** No, Mother, I cannot. I will stay by the side of Duryodhana. All these years, when you had no thoughts for your son, whom you abandoned to the river, Duryodhana has been my only friend. The stigma, sutaputra, has clung to me forever. You don't know how much I have suffered. Wherever I went, my name preceded me and I was no welcome.

**Kunti:** But now it will be known that you are not a sutaputra, but a ksatriya. I do not care what people will say, even about the injustice I have done to you. I am prepared to face the contemptuous eyes of the world. Please come to your brothers.

**Radheya:** Duryodhana is my brother. Depending on me and my hatred for Arjuna, Duryodhana has launched this great war. I will have to forget this visit of yours. ( pauses) And Radha is my mother. She took me into her bosom with affection. Her breasts were full of milk when she took me in her arms. Forgive me for saying this, but that is where my natural affection ahas gone. If you want some alms from me, I'll promise you this. On the great battlefield of Kurushetra, I will not attempt to slay my bothers, with the exception of Arjuna - I must fight with him. But, I am doomed - Krsna has taken up the cause of Arjuna. The war which is to be fought on the field called Kurukshetra is a sacrifice. Krsna is the master of ceremonies and Arjuna is the star performer. The other brothers will all be puppets in Krsna's hands. Krsna will see that your five sons will be spared.  I will have to forget this visit of yours. I must now go on with my duty, much as it displeases you to hear all this. Mother, please bless me that my name will live as long as the world of men exists.

**(He falls at her feet. She blesses him. They embrace. The lights dim and Radheya departs for the battlefield.)**

**Radheya:** Arjuna, son of the great Queen Kunti - I, Radheya, a sutaputra and son of  Radha and Atiratha, challenge you to combat.

**(Radheya draws numerous arrows and dodges those of Arjuna. He occasionally pantamimes that he is moving his chariot, then suddenly his chariot becomes stuck in the mud. He gets off the chariot and attempts to raise the left wheel, while continuing to receive the onslaught of arrows.)**

Arjuna, stop! My left chariot wheel is stuck. Do not release your arrows. Uphold military conduct. Stop. Let us deal in all fairness.

Krsna, great Charioteer of Arjuna, please tell Arjuna to act righteously!

**(He continues to struggle with the wheel. Radheya is struck by an**

**arrow and he dies. The light go out, then brighten a little.)**